

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Argument Sample

### **The current driving age in Maryland is fifteen years and nine months. Should the driving age in Maryland be raised to seventeen years?**

The state of New Jersey has raised the driving age to seventeen. Other states are considering doing the same. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety is even encouraging that the age be raised to eighteen in order to decrease teen fatalities. However, raising the driving age above sixteen is not necessary and will actually create problems for teens and parents.

One argument for keeping the driving age at sixteen is that graduated licensing programs for new drivers have been decreasing the numbers of accidents involving teen deaths. These programs include laws such as not allowing teens to drive with their friends in the car and not allowing teens to drive late at night. In the last ten years, there has been a decrease of 27% in teen auto deaths in states with graduated licensing programs. With a graduated licensing program, there is no need to raise the driving age in Maryland.

One argument that people make for raising the driving age is that sixteen year-olds are too immature to drive. This is a weak argument because maturity levels should be determined by parents. Many sixteen year-olds are mature enough to drive. Young people have to have parent permission to get a driver's license and if the teen is immature, the parent should be able to make that decision. It is unfair to punish mature sixteen year-olds because some sixteen year-old are still immature.

Finally, raising the driving age to seventeen will make it hard for parents to teach their teens to drive. Many teens move out of their parents' homes and go to college when they are seventeen or eighteen. By raising the driving age, parents will not have the opportunity to teach their children to drive and to spend time in the car with them while they practice driving. How will teens learn to drive if their parents cannot supervise them?

Keeping the driving age at fifteen and nine months will allow parents to teach their teens to drive before they go to college. Maryland's graduated licensing program will prevent teens from engaging in riskier behavior. Parents can decide when it is the right time for their teen to drive. Therefore, the driving age should not be raised in Maryland.

### **Annotations**

The writer of this piece:

- **Makes a claim that is clearly distinguished from the counter claim.**
  - *The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety is even encouraging that the age be raised to eighteen in order to decrease teen fatalities. However, raising the driving age above sixteen is not necessary and will actually create problems for teens and parents.*

- **Uses relevant facts and evidence to support the claim.**
  - *These programs include laws such as not allowing teens to drive with their friends in the car and not allowing teens to drive late at night.*
  - *In the last ten years, there has been a decrease of 27% in teen auto deaths in states with graduated licensing programs.*
  - *Young people have to have parent permission to get a driver's license...*

**Develops an argument logically with cohesive organization**

- *One argument for keeping the driving age at sixteen is that graduated licensing programs for new drivers have been decreasing the numbers of accidents involving teen deaths.*
- *One argument that people make for raising the driving age is that sixteen year-olds are too immature to drive.*
- *Finally, raising the driving age to seventeen will make it hard for parents to teach their teens to drive.*

**Uses words, phrases and clauses to clarify the relationship and create cohesion between the claim, counterclaims, reasons and evidence**

- *One argument that people make for raising the driving age is that sixteen year-olds are too immature to drive. This is a weak argument because maturity levels should be determined by parents. Young people have to have parent permission to get a driver's license and if the teen is immature, the parent should be able to make that decision.*

**Establishes and maintains a formal style.**

**Demonstrates good command of the conventions of standard written English with minimal errors.**